

What is claimed is:

1. A content distribution management system that circulates a content via a network, comprising a plurality of communication terminal devices that can exchange a content on a network, and a distribution management device that performs copyright management of a content and payment management concerning usage of the content,
 - 5 wherein the communication terminal device includes:
 - a content receiving unit operable to receive a content from another communication terminal device;
 - 10 a purchase requesting unit operable to send purchase requesting information for requesting purchase of the received content to the distribution management device; and
 - 15 a right information receiving unit operable to receive, from the distribution management device, right information for enabling usage of the content which is requested to be purchased under a certain rule, and
 - 20 the distribution management device includes:
 - a memory unit operable to memorize information regarding the copyright management and information regarding the payment management by relating the information with individual content;
 - 25 a right information sending unit operable to specify right information according to the information regarding the copyright management that is specified based on the purchase requesting information received from the communication terminal device, and send the specified right information to a predetermined communication terminal device; and
 - 30 a payment management processing unit operable to update the information regarding the copyright management and the information regarding the payment management based on the purchase requesting information.

2. The content distribution management system according to
Claim 1, further comprising a communication exchange device that
provides information regarding the circulation of the content to the
communication terminal device,

5 wherein the communication terminal device further includes:
a search requesting unit operable to send information
regarding a search to the communication exchange device, receive
result information regarding a predetermined search from the
communication exchange device, and specify a content and a
10 distributor of the content based on the received result information;
and

15 a distribution requesting unit operable to send, to the
specified distributor, sending requesting information for requesting
sending of the specified content, and

20 the communication exchange device includes a search
responding unit operable to receive information regarding a search
from the communication terminal device, make a result information
regarding the search based on the received information, and send
the result information to the communication terminal device that is
a sender of the information regarding the search.

3. A communication terminal device in a content distribution
management system that circulates a content via a network, the
content distribution management system comprising a distribution
25 management device that performs copyright management
regarding a content and payment management concerning usage of
the content,

wherein the communication terminal device includes:

a content receiving unit operable to receive a content from

30 another communication terminal device;

a purchase requesting unit operable to send purchase
requesting information for requesting purchase of the received

content to the distribution management device; and

5 a right information receiving unit operable to receive, from the distribution management device, right information for enabling usage of the content which is requested to be purchased under a certain rule.

4. The communication terminal device according to Claim 3 in the content distribution management system further comprising a communication exchange device that provides information 10 regarding the circulation of the content,

wherein the communication terminal device further includes:

15 a search requesting unit operable to send information regarding a search to the communication exchange device, receive result information regarding a predetermined search from the communication exchange device, and specify a content and a distributor of the content based on the received result information; and

20 a distribution requesting unit operable to send, to the specified distributor, sending requesting information for requesting sending of the specified content.

5. The communication terminal device according to Claim 4, further comprising a redistributing unit operable to send the content received by the content receiving unit to another communication 25 terminal device.

6. The communication terminal device according to Claim 4,

30 wherein the distribution requesting unit specifies the communication terminal device itself that makes the request or another communication terminal device as a destination of the specified content, and sends the sending requesting information to the specified device.

7. The communication terminal device according to Claim 4,
wherein the search requesting unit sends a search condition
to the communication exchange device, receives a predetermined
5 search list from the communication exchange device, and specifies a
content and a distributor of the content based on attribute
information indicating a characteristic of the content that is
attached to the received search list.

10 8. The communication terminal device according to Claim 7,
wherein the search requesting unit further weights the
attribute information, compares contents based on the attribute
information, and specifies a most weighted content and a distributor
of the content.

15 9. The communication terminal device according to Claim 8,
wherein the search requesting unit specifies the most
weighted content and the distributor of the content based on data
size of the content and a time required for distribution of the
20 content.

10. The communication terminal device according to Claim 8,
wherein the search requesting unit specifies the most
weighted content and the distributor of the content based on an
25 image format or a data compression method of the content.

11. The communication terminal device according to Claim 3 in
the content distribution management system further comprising a
communication exchange device that provides information
30 regarding the circulation of the content,
wherein the communication terminal device further includes:
a search requesting unit operable to send information

regarding a search to the communication exchange device, receive result information regarding a predetermined search from the communication exchange device, and specify a content and a distributor of the content based on the received result information;

5 a distribution requesting unit operable to send, to the specified distributor, sending requesting information for requesting sending of the specified content; and

10 a content using unit operable to use the content which is requested to be purchased according to the right information received by the right information receiving unit.

15 12. The communication terminal device according to Claim 11, wherein the content using unit further includes a usage request processing unit operable to send usage requesting information for requesting usage of the purchased content to the distribution management device and receive usage licensing information for licensing the usage from the distribution management device, and uses the content based on the usage licensing information.

20 13. The communication terminal device according to Claim 12, wherein the usage requesting information is any one or a combination of reproduction, moving, copying, printing and processing.

25 14. The communication terminal device according to Claim 3, wherein the purchase requesting unit adds information indicating an intermediary to information that is to be sent to the distribution management device, and sends the information.

30 15. The communication terminal device according to Claim 3 further comprising:

an advertising information memory unit operable to memorize advertising information; and

an advertising information sending unit operable to read out advertising information from the advertising information memory unit and send the advertising information to the distribution management device.

16. A distribution management device in a content distribution management system that circulates a content via a network, the content distribution management system comprising a plurality of communication terminal devices that can exchange a content on the network,

wherein the distribution management device includes:

a memory unit operable to memorize information regarding copyright management of the content and information regarding payment management by relating the information with individual content;

a right information sending unit operable to specify right information according to the information regarding the copyright management that is specified based on purchase requesting information for requesting purchase of a content, when the purchase requesting information is received from one of the communication terminal devices, and send the right information to a predetermined communication terminal device; and

a payment management processing unit operable to update the information regarding the copyright management and the information regarding the payment management based on the purchase requesting information.

17. The distribution management device according to Claim 16, wherein the payment management processing unit further makes a history of information regarding the purchase of the

content, and performs payment processing for allocating a charge based on the information of the history.

18. The distribution management device according to Claim 16,
5 wherein the memory unit further memorizes information indicating a communication terminal device corresponding to information indicating an intermediary, and

the payment management processing unit further distinguishes whether the information indicating an intermediary is added or not to the purchase requesting information that is received from the communication terminal device, and when the information is added, further performs payment processing concerning an intermediary fee allocation for the communication terminal device that is equivalent to the intermediary.

15 19. The distribution management device according to Claim 16,
wherein the payment management processing unit, when the information regarding the copyright management is updated according to purchase of a content, further performs payment processing concerning collection of a management fee for the management for at least one of the communication terminal device that provides the content corresponding to the update, the communication terminal device that intermediates the content and the communication terminal device that purchases the content.

20 25 20. The distribution management device according to Claim 16,
wherein the right information sending unit further decides whether usage of the content is possible or not based on usage requesting information for requesting usage of the content purchased from the communication terminal device and the information regarding the copyright management stored in the memory unit, when the usage requesting information is received,

and when it is decided that the usage is possible, sends usage licensing information for licensing the usage to the communication terminal device, and

5 the payment management processing unit further updates the information regarding the copyright management based on the usage requesting information, when it is decided that the usage is possible.

21. The distribution management device according to Claim 16, 10 further comprising an advertising information storage unit operable to receive advertising information from one of the communication terminal devices, and store the advertising information and information indicating the communication terminal device by relating the information with each other,

15 wherein the right information sending unit further reads out advertising information corresponding to the one communication terminal device from the advertising information storage unit, when the purchase requesting or usage requesting information of the content is received from the other communication terminal device, 20 and sends the advertising information as well as the right information to the other communication terminal device, and

the payment management processing unit further performs payment processing concerning collection of an advertising rate for the one communication terminal device.

25 22. A content distribution management method for a distribution management system that circulates a content via a network, the distribution management system comprising a plurality of communication terminal devices that can exchange the content 30 on a network and a distribution management device that performs copyright management of the content and payment management concerning usage of the content,

wherein the communication terminal device includes:

a content receiving step for receiving the content from another communication terminal device;

5 information for requesting purchase of the received content to the distribution management device; and

a right information receiving step for receiving, from the distribution management device, right information for enabling the usage of the content which is requested to be purchased under a certain rule, and

10 the distribution management device includes a unit operable to memorize information regarding the copyright management and information regarding the payment management by relating the information with individual content, and includes:

15 a right information sending step for specifying right information according to the information regarding the copyright management that is specified based on the purchase requesting information received from the communication terminal device and sending the right information to a predetermined communication terminal device; and

20 a payment management processing step for updating the information regarding the copyright management and updating the information regarding the payment management based on the purchase requesting information.

25 23. The content distribution management method according to Claim 22 for the content distribution management system further comprising a communication exchange device that provides information regarding the circulation of the content to the communication terminal device,

30 wherein the communication terminal device further includes: a search requesting step for sending information regarding a

search to the communication exchange device, receiving result information regarding a predetermined search from the communication exchange device, and specifying a content and a distributor of the content based on the received result information;

5 and

a distribution requesting step for sending, to the specified distributor, sending requesting information for requesting sending of the specified content, and

the communication exchange device includes a search responding step for receiving information regarding a search from the communication terminal device, making result information regarding a search based on the information, and sending the result information to the communication terminal device that is a sender of the information regarding the search.

20 24. A content usage method for a communication terminal device in a content distribution management system that circulates a content via a network, the content distribution management system comprising a distribution management device that performs copyright management of a content and payment management concerning usage of the content,

25 wherein the content usage method includes:

a content receiving step for receiving a content from another communication terminal device;

a purchase requesting step for sending purchase requesting information for requesting purchase of the received content to the distribution management device; and

30 a right information receiving step for receiving, from the distribution management device, right information for enabling usage of the content which is requested to be purchased under a certain rule.

25. The content usage method according to Claim 24 for the content distribution management system further comprising a communication exchange device that provides information regarding the circulation of the content,

5 wherein the content usage method further includes:

a search requesting step for sending information regarding a search to the communication exchange device, receiving result information regarding a predetermined search from the communication exchange device, and specifying a content and a distributor of the content based on the received result information;

10 and
a distribution requesting step for sending, to the specified distributor, sending requesting information for requesting sending of the specified content.

15 26. A distribution management method for a distribution management device in a content distribution management system that circulates a content via a network, the content distribution management system comprising a plurality of communication terminal devices that can exchange a content on the network,

20 wherein the distribution management device includes a unit operable to memorize information regarding copyright management of the content and information regarding payment management by relating the information with individual content, and

25 the distribution management device includes:

a right information sending step for specifying right information according to the information regarding the copyright management that was specified based on purchase requesting information for requesting purchase of content when the purchase requesting information is received from the communication terminal device, and sending the right information to a predetermined communication terminal device; and

a payment management processing step for updating the information regarding the copyright management and updating the information regarding the payment management based on the purchase requesting information.

5 27. A program for using a content at a communication terminal device in a content distribution management system that circulates a content via a network, the content distribution management system comprising a distribution management device that performs 10 copyright management of a content and payment management concerning usage of the content,

wherein the program has a computer perform:

a content receiving step for receiving a content from another communication terminal device;

15 a purchase requesting step for sending purchase requesting information for requesting purchase of the received content to the distribution management device; and

20 a right information receiving step for receiving, from the distribution management device, right information for enabling usage of the content which is requested to be purchased under a certain rule.

25 28. A program for using a content at a communication terminal device in a content distribution management system that circulates a content via a network, the content distribution management system further comprising a distribution management device that performs 30 copyright management of a content and payment management concerning usage of the content, and a communication exchange device that provides information regarding the circulation of the content,

wherein the program has a computer perform:

a content receiving step for receiving a content from another

communication terminal device;

5 a purchase requesting step for sending purchase requesting information for requesting purchase of the received content to the distribution management device;

10 a right information receiving step for receiving, from the distribution management device, right information for enabling usage of the content which is requested to be purchased under a certain rule;

15 a search requesting step for sending information regarding a search to the communication exchange device, receiving result information regarding a predetermined search from the communication exchange device, and specifying a content and a distributor of the content based on the received result information; and

20 a distribution requesting step for sending, to the specified distributor, sending requesting information for requesting sending of the specified content.

25 29. A program for performing distribution management of a content at a distribution management device in a content distribution management system that circulates a content via a network, the content distribution management system comprising a plurality of communication terminal devices that can exchange a content on the network, and the distribution management device including a unit operable to memorize information regarding copyright management of the content and information regarding payment management by relating the information with individual content,

30 wherein the program has a computer perform:

35 a right information sending step for specifying right information according to the information regarding the copyright management that is specified based on purchase requesting

information for requesting purchase of a content when the purchase requesting information is received from the communication terminal device, and sending the right information to a predetermined communication terminal device; and

5 a payment management processing step for updating the information regarding the copyright management and updating the information regarding the payment management based on the purchase requesting information.

10 30. A recording medium on which a program for using a content at a communication terminal device in a distribution management system that circulates a content via a network is recorded, the content distribution management system comprising a distribution management device that performs copyright management of a content and payment management concerning usage of the content,

15 wherein the program has a computer perform:

a content receiving step for receiving a content from another communication terminal device;

20 a purchase requesting step for sending purchase requesting information for requesting purchase of the received content to the distribution management device; and

25 a right information receiving step for receiving, from the distribution management device, right information for enabling usage of the content which is requested to be purchased under a certain rule.

30 31. A recording medium on which a program for using a content at a communication terminal device in a content distribution management system that circulates a content via a network is recorded, the content distribution management system further comprising a distribution management device that performs copyright management of a content and payment management

concerning usage of the content, and a communication exchange device that provides information regarding the circulation of the content,

wherein the program has a computer perform:

5 a content receiving step for receiving a content from another communication terminal device;

a purchase requesting step for sending purchase requesting information for requesting purchase of the received content to the distribution management device;

10 a right information receiving step for receiving, from the distribution management device, right information for enabling usage of the content which is requested to be purchased under a certain rule;

15 a search requesting step for sending information regarding a search to the communication exchange device, receiving result information regarding a predetermined search from the communication exchange device, and specifying a content and a distributor of the content based on the received result information; and

20 a distribution requesting step for sending, to the specified distributor, sending requesting information for requesting sending of the specified content.

32. A recording medium on which a program for performing distribution management of a content at a distribution management device in a content distribution management system that circulates a content via a network is recorded, the content distribution management system comprising a plurality of communication terminal devices that can exchange a content on the network, and
25 the distribution management device including a unit operable to memorize information regarding copyright management of the content and information regarding payment management by
30

relating the information with individual content,

wherein the program has a computer perform:

a right information sending step for specifying right information according to the information regarding the copyright

5 management that is specified based on purchase requesting information for requesting purchase of a content when the purchase requesting information is received from the communication terminal device, and sending the right information to a predetermined communication terminal device; and

10 a payment management processing step for updating the information regarding the copyright management and updating the information regarding the payment management based on the purchase requesting information.